RAJYA SABHA

Friday, 20th December, 1985|29 Agrahayana, 1907 (Saka)

The House met at eleven of the Clock. Mr. Chairman in the Chair.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Consumer price resistance movement

*461. DR. MOHD. HASHIM KIDWAI: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state.

(a) whether there is any proposal under Government's consideration to encourage consumer price resistance movement to effectively check price rise;

(b) if so, what are the specific measures which Government propose to take in this respect; and

(c) whether Government propose to give financial assistance to voluntary bodies engaged in the consumer price resistance movement or set up citizens' representative committees to organise such movement?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI K. P. SINGH DEO): (a) to (c) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

In order to encourage the voluntary consumer movement, the Government has taken various measures including setting up a Consumer Protection Council to advise the Government on measures for consumer protection, holding workshops and seminars for creating consumer's awareness and giving financial grants to voluntary consumer organisations. Effective check on price rise can be met by skillful supply management. The State Governments have been advised to enforce important consumer's protection laws such as Essential Commodities Act, 1955, Prevention of Blackmarketing and Maintenance of Supplies of Essential Commodities Act, 1980, Standards of Weights and Measures Act, 1976, Standards of Weights and Measures (Packaged Commodity) Rules, 1977, Prevention of Food Adulteration Act, 1954, Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1954. The public distribution system and cooperative network are being strengthened and monitored. Brochures on adulteration and weights and measures have been issued for education of the consumers. The State Governments and Union Territory Administrations have been advised to create cell to receive complaints of consumers and to act on those complaints. Delhi Administration has recently set up a Directorate of Consumers Affairs for receiving complaints. State Governments and Union Territory Administrations have been addressed to organise and activate voluntary consumers' movement. In order to make legal and administrative measures including monitoring more effective and for better involvement of public and voluntary bodies in the movement, the Government of India will be organising an All India Seminar of Voluntary Consumers' Organisations in January, 1986.

DR. MOHD. HASHIM KIDWAI: Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Minister which are the voluntary organisations to whom financial grants have been given and what is the quantum of such financial grants?

SHRI K. P. SINGH DEO: Sir, their number runs into more than five hundred. Would you like me to read out the entire list?

MR. CHAIRMAN: You mention two or three and then say that the entire list is there.

SHRI K. P. SINGH DEO: Sir, I can lay a copy on the Table of the House.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Very good. A statement will be laid on the Table of the House. What is your second supplementary?

DR. MOHD. HASHIM KIDWAI: I would like to know from the Minister in how many States and Union territories such voluntary organisations have been set up.

SHRI K. P. SINGH DEO: Sir, there are more than 500 organisations and they

are spread over all the States. What other information does he require? Most of the States have such organisations.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You are just asking for the list. What exactly is the information that you want.

DR. MOHD. HASHIM KIDWAI: In how many States and Union territories such organisations have been set up?

MR. CHAIRMAN: In the list which you are giving, it will contain everything.

श्री सत्य प्रकाश मालवीय : सभापति महोदय, दिल्ली प्रशासन ने अभी हाल ही में एक उपभोक्ता निदेशालय की स्थापना की है । मैं माननीय मंत्री महोदय से जानना चाहता हूं कि इसका ढांचा क्या है? (व्यवधान) मेरे कहने का मतलब यह है कि अभी हाल ही में दिल्ली प्रशासन ने जो उपभोक्ता निदेशालय की स्थापना की है उसका ढांचा किस प्रकार का है ?

SHRI K. P. SINGH DEO: Sir, so far as the one which has been set up in Delhi is concerned, the newspapers carry out every day information about the consumer protection by the Delhi Administration. If you want, I can also put that in the statement and lay it on the Table of the House.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Do you want the scheme or any particular aspect?

SHRI SATYA PRAKASH MALAVIYA: Sir, my question is about the set-up of the Directorate.

SHRI K. P. SINGH DEO: That is exactly what I am saying. I cannot say it in a couple of words. If you want, I can place it on the Table of the House.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You place it on the Table of the House.

SHRI JAGESH DESAI: Sir, I would like to know whether the Government have issued any guidelines to these organisations as to on which items they should spend the money and whether any machinery is there to see that the moneys are properly spent. Secondly, Sir, as we all know the tribal people are the most exploited section by the shopkeepers and as such whether there are any organisations in the tribal areas to cater to their needs, and, if not, whether the Government proposes to have mobile vans to cater to the needs of the tribal people?

SHRI K. P. SINGH DEO: Sir, so far as the first part of the question is concerned, the reply is contained in the statement that I have given in answer to the question. As far as mobile vans are concerned, we do give help to the State Governments for mobile vans if and when the request comes and wherever it is in the scheme.

SHRI SHANKARRAO NARAYANRAO DESHMUKH: Sir, for the purpose of consumer protection so many Acts have been passed and put into force and these are mentioned in the Statement. May I know from the hon. Minister what is the outcome of these Acts and what is the result of these enforcements and how many prosecutions have been launched and what is their result? Secondly, a cell has been created to receive the complaints of consumers and take action on those complaints. I would like to know how many complaints have been received in all these cells and what action has been taken on them.

SHRI K. P. SINGH DEO: I do not have the figures with me as to how many complaints each cell has received: but I can ask this information from the States and provide this to the hon. Member for his information. About raids also, it is the same position. We have to ask the States as to how many raids have been conducted and how much has been recovered and what is the out-turn or output out of the raids.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Next question.